

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The final office action of March 7, 2007, has been carefully reviewed and these remarks are responsive thereto. Reconsideration and allowance of the instant application are respectfully requested. Claims 1, 3-4, 12, 16-18, 24, 26-28, 33-35, and 37-38 have been amended to place the claims in a more preferred form. Claims 15, 19, and 29-32 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 39-42 have been added. Claims 1-14, 16-18, 20-28, and 33-42 remain in this application.

Initially, Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended in the Examiner Interview of June 19, 2007. Applicants have amended the claims in response to the Interview. No new matter has been added with this amendment. Applicants believe the claims, as amended, are allowable over the art of record.

Claims 1-6 , 8-15, 18-22, and 24-38 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,352,479 to Sparks, II (hereinafter referred to as "*Sparks*"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Applicants' amended claim 1 recites, among other features, "receiving at least one response to at least one query about the first online game experience following completion of the first online game; determining a play style parameter of a requesting user based on the at least one response." Support for amended independent claim 1 may be found, among other places, in paragraphs [57-61] of Applicants' original written description and in Figures 5, 8A, and 8B.

Sparks describes a matching method based on a user's skill level compared with the skill levels of others, the expressed preferences of the user, and the expressed preferences of the other users playing each game. (Col. 6, ll. 23-34). *Sparks* describes matching users according to an algorithm discussed with respect to FIGs. 11A and 11B. (Col. 6, ll. 18-23). As described with respect to FIGs. 11A and 11B, the determination is made by comparing the user's relative successes during previous attempts at playing each game. (Col. 6, ll. 59-61).

However, any expressed preferences of a user or expressed preference of other players is only with respect to weapon choice for a game or skill level to participate. A user is never questioned about an online gaming experience. At best, *Sparks* allows a pre-configured profile

of a user with skill level options and weapon's choice (i.e., preferences) options dictate matching a user to a game. There is no teaching or suggestion in *Sparks* of, "receiving at least one response to at least one query about the first online game experience following completion of the first online game; determining a play style parameter of a requesting user based on the at least one response." As such, because *Sparks* fails to teach or suggest each and every feature of Applicants' claim 1, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Amended independent claims 18 and 26 include similar features as described above with respect to Applicants' independent claim 1. Therefore, for at least similar reasons as described above with respect to claim 1, Applicants' claims 18 and 26 are patentably distinct from *Sparks*.

Claims 2-6, 8-14, 20-22, 24-25, 27-28, and 33-38, which ultimately depend from claims 1, 18, or 26, are patentably distinct from *Sparks* for at least the same reasons as their ultimate base claims and further in view of the additional advantageous features recited therein.

Claims 16 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,203,433 to Kume (hereinafter referred to as "*Kume*") in view of *Sparks*. Applicants respectfully traverse.

Amended independent claim 16 includes similar features as described above with respect to Applicants' independent claim 1. *Kume* fails to cure the deficiencies of *Sparks* as noted above with respect to Applicants' claim 1. Therefore, for at least similar reasons as described above with respect to claim 1, Applicants' claim 16 is patentably distinct from *Sparks* and *Kume*.

Claims 7 and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Sparks* in view of U.S. Published Application No. 2002-0083179 to Shaw (hereinafter referred to as "*Shaw*"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Even assuming, without admitting, that the combination of *Sparks* and *Shaw* is proper, *Shaw* fails to remedy the deficiencies of *Sparks* identified with respect to amended claims 1 and 18 from which claims 7 and 23 depend, respectively. Namely, *Shaw* does not teach or suggest, "receiving at least one response to at least one query about the first online game experience following completion of the first online game; determining a play style parameter of a requesting user based on the at least one response." Therefore, claims 7 and 23 are patentably distinct from the combination of *Sparks* and *Shaw*.

Any combination of *Sparks*, *Kume*, and/or *Shaw* also fails to teach or suggest the features of new dependent claims 39-42. As such, allowance of these new claims over the art of record is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

All rejections having been addressed, Applicants respectfully submit that the instant application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully solicits prompt notification of the same. Should the Examiner find that a telephonic or personal interview would expedite passage to issue of the present application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below. If any fees are required or if an overpayment has been made the Commissioner is authorized to charge or credit Deposit Account No. 19-0733.

Respectfully submitted,

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